



# COA COMPARISON & DECISION

**EWT  
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**Capt Marcolongo**

# LEARNING OBJECTIVES



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**TLO: Without the aid of references, properly compare COAs and arrive at a commander's decision within the framework of a selected exercise scenario per MCWP 5-1.**

**ELOs: Without the aid of references:**

- 1. Identify the purpose of a COA comparison and decision.**
- 2. Identify the principle inputs for a COA comparison and decision.**
- 3. Identify the principle outputs for a COA comparison and decision.**





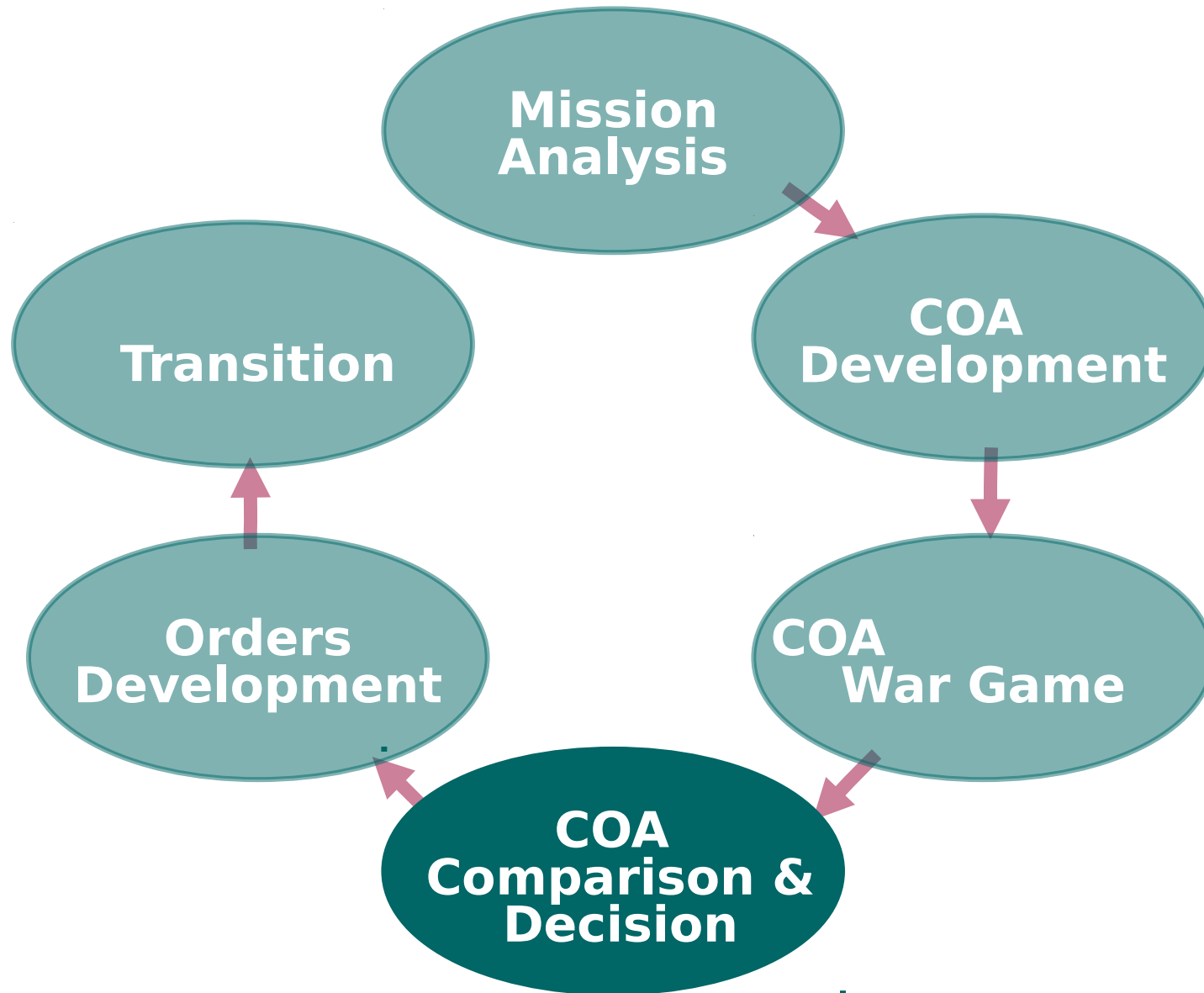
# PURPOSE

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**To ensure understanding of each COA by the staff and MSC commanders and to decide which COA best fits the requirements of the mission by comparing the COAs and gaining feedback from the staff and MSC commanders.**

# STEP 4: COA COMPARISON & DECISION

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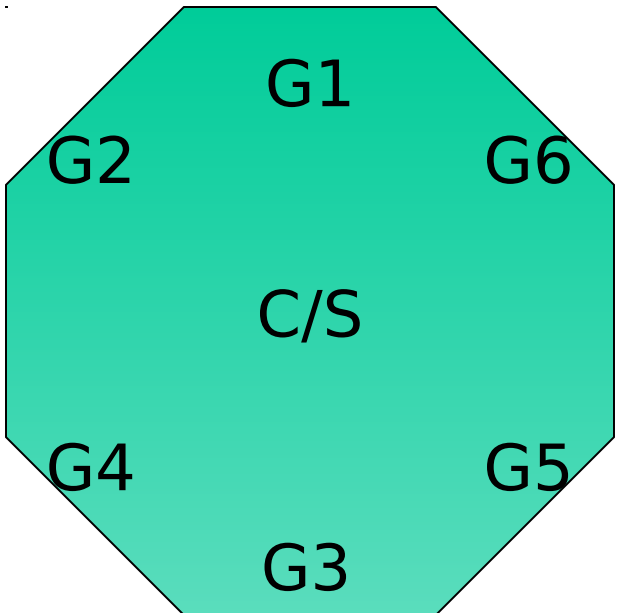


# COA COMPARISON TEAM

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**COMMANDER**  
★ ★ ★

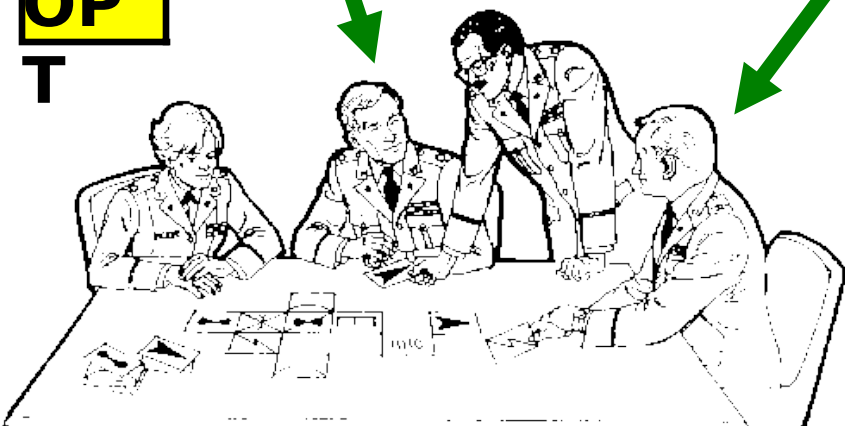
**PRINCIPAL STAFF**



**MSC  
COMMANDERS**  
★ ★



**OP  
T**



# COA COMPARISON & DECISION



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## Process:

- Perform COA evaluation
- Perform COA comparison
- **Commander's decision**
- Prepare CONOPS
- Refine IPB products
- **Issue Warning Order**

## Output:

- CONOPS
- Updated IPB
- Planning Support Tool
- Updated CCIRs
- Staff Estimates
- Branches & Sequences
- **Warning Order**

## Input:

- Updated IPB
- War Game results
- Wargamed COAs graphic & narrative
- Information on commander's evaluation criteria
- Planning Support Tool
- Refined Staff Estimate





# COA EVALUATION

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- **COMMANDER LEADS** discussion to examine each COA
  - Evaluation Criteria
  - Advantages/ Disadvantages
  - MSC CMDRS/ Staff Feedback
- **Commander established evaluation criteria**
  - METT-T
  - Judgment
  - Personal Experience
- **Sequential or Simultaneous**

COA 1: A, B, C

COA 2: A, B, C

COA 3: A, B, C

A: COA 1, COA 2, COA 3

B: COA 1, COA 2, COA 3

C: COA 1, COA 2, COA 3



# EVALUATION CRITERIA

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**Friendly COG vs. Enemy COG thru CV**

**Maintain tempo without  
unplanned operational  
ause**

**Rapidly defeats  
second echelon**

**COMMANDER**  
★ ★ ★

**Simplicity**

**Effects of Wx**

**Rapidly penetrates  
enemy forces**



**Amphibious  
Ops:  
Risk,  
complexity,  
& timing**



# COMPARISON / DECISION INPUTS

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## ➔ **Commander's Evaluation Criteria**

### □ **War gamed COA(s) with Graphic and Narrative**

- **Updated IPB Products**
- **War Game Results**
  - **Task Org**
  - **Asset Shortfalls**
  - **Refined CCIRs**
  - **List of Critical Events & DPs**
- **Planning Support Tools**
  - **COA War Game Work Sheet**
  - **Synchronization Matrix**
  - **Decision Support Template/Matrix**
- **Refined Staff Estimates**
- **Subordinate Commanders' Estimates of Supportability**





# COMPARISON / DECISION PROCESS

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- **COA Evaluation**
- **COA Comparison**
- **Commander's Decision**



# EVALUATION MATRIX

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## COA ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES

Commander's Evaluation Criteria	COA 1
Friendly COG vs Enemy COG thru CV	
Maintains tempo while avoiding unplanned operational pause	
Simplicity	
Rapidly defeats the 2 <sup>nd</sup> echelon	
Rapidly penetrates enemy forces	
Amphibious operations: risk, complexity, and timing	
Effects of weather	



# COA ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES

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Commander's Evaluation Criteria	COA 1
Friendly COG vs Enemy COG thru CV	Defeats Armor Bde CATK Force early
Maintains tempo while avoiding unplanned operational pause	Pause after penetration to sort through unit locations and coordination measure shifts
Simplicity	Numerous control measures complicate C2
Rapidly defeats the 2 <sup>nd</sup> echelon	2 <sup>nd</sup> echelon able to w/draw before decisively engaged
Rapidly penetrates enemy forces	Rapid penetration lost in complicated use of FSCM that restrict maneuver
Amphibious operations: risk, complexity, and timing	No effect
Effects of weather	Need favorable weather for defeat of COG

# EVALUATION/COMPARISON MATRIX

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Commander's Evaluation Criteria	COA 1	COA 2	COA 3
Friendly COG vs Enemy COG thru CV			
Maintains tempo while avoiding unplanned operational pause			
Simplicity			
Rapidly defeats the 2 <sup>nd</sup> echelon			
Rapidly penetrates enemy forces			
Amphibious operations: risk, complexity, and timing			
Effects of weather			

**Comments or numbers  
in each box describe  
Advantages/Disadvantages  
or rank of each COA**





# COA COMPARISON

Good Fair Poor

Evaluation  Comparison

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Commander's Evaluation Criteria	COA 1	COA 2	COA 3
Friendly COG vs Enemy COG thru CV	Good	Fair	Fair
Maintains tempo while avoiding unplanned operational pause	Poor	Fair	Fair
Simplicity	Poor	Poor	Fair
Rapidly defeats the 2 <sup>nd</sup> echelon	Poor	Fair	Fair
Rapidly penetrates enemy force	Fair	Fair	Good
Amphibious operations: risk, complexity, and timing	N/A	N/A	N/A
Effects of weather	Fair	Poor	Fair



# COA COMPARISON

**Good** Fair **Poor**

**5** **3** **1**

**Evaluation**



**Comparison**

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Commander's Evaluation Criteria	COA 1	COA 2	COA 3
Friendly COG vs Enemy COG thru CV	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
Maintains tempo while avoiding unplanned operational pause	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
Simplicity	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
Rapidly defeats the 2 <sup>nd</sup> echelon	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
Rapidly penetrates enemy force	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>
Amphibious operations: risk, complexity, and timing	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Effects of weather	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
Totals	<b>14</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>20</b>



# COA COMPARISON

**Good** **Fair** **Poor**      **5** **3** **1**      **EWT**  
**Evaluation**      **Weight Evaluation Criteria**      **Comparison**

Commander's Evaluation Criteria	COA 1	COA 2	COA 3
Friendly COG vs Enemy COG thru CV (2) <b>6 wts.</b>	<b>30</b>	18	18
Maintains tempo while avoiding unplanned operational pause (4) <b>4 wts.</b>	<b>4</b>	12	12
Simplicity (5) <b>3 wts.</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>15</b>	9
Rapidly defeats the 2 <sup>nd</sup> echelon (3) <b>5 wts.</b>	<b>3</b>	15	15
Rapidly penetrates enemy force (1) <b>7 wts.</b>	21	21	<b>35</b>
Amphibious operations: risk, complexity, and timing (7) <b>1 wts.</b>	0	0	0
Effects of weather (6) <b>2 wts.</b>	6	<b>10</b>	6
<b>Totals</b>	<b>67</b>	91	<b>95</b>



# DECISION OPTIONS

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- **Select a COA**
- **Modify a COA**
- **Develop a new COA**
- **Discard all COAs**

# COA DECISION

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# COMPARISON / DECISION OUTPUTS

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## ➔ **Concept of Ops & Task Organization**

### □ **Warning Order**

- **Updated IPB**
- **Planning Support Tools**
- **Updated CCIRs**
- **Staff Estimates**
- **Branches & Sequels for Further Planning**



# SUMMARY



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## **Discussed:**

- **Comparison/ Decision Process**
- **Role of the Commander, Staff, & MSC Commanders**
- **Support Tools Available**